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REVIEWS

Japan: An Attempt at Interpretation. By LAFCADIO HEARN.
New York: The Macmillan Co., 1904.

On p. 160 of W. E. Griffis' *The Mikado's Empire* is textual evidence that, so late as 1876, intelligent men, and theologians at that—rather in sooth because they were theologians—could harbor such atrocious notions about Shintoism, the ethnic faith of the Japanese, as the following: “Shinto is in no proper sense of the term a religion. . . . In its lower forms it is blind obedience to governmental and priestly dictates.” The present reviewer bears these Christian apologists and heathen defamers “witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.” They wrote in the days when hierology (comparative religion) was still inchoate, for C. P. Tiele's *Elements* did not appear in its English dress until 1877; and when Japan's abasement before the “Christian” powers was complete, and therefore everything Japanese assumed to be worthless. But the reaction came, of course, and is now pretty well completed. Japan's novel yet glorious art conquered the world; Japan's new yet ever-victorious army has conquered Russia's imposing array; and now Mr. Hearn completely routs the contemnners of a great people's sincere faith. The consensus of hierologists that no people was ever found without a religion had already been given; and the creed, cult, and ethics of Shintoism had been correctly described; but it remained for Mr. Hearn to give a more complete and intimate account than had previously been done of the ancestorism in Shinto and of its profound influence upon politics and morality.

It will surprise no one to learn that Mr. Hearn overdid his contention, just because such excess is the well-nigh inevitable reaction from the underestimate that he found current and sought to correct. As he states the case on p. 4: “Hitherto the subject of Japanese religion has been written of chiefly by the sworn enemies of that religion; by others it has been almost entirely ignored.” But now that “see-saw” has followed “see,” we may hope to win a final equilibrium of correct appreciation. To this end several corrections are called for; but, before they are made, clearness will be secured by

a concise analysis of the treatise; for in its course religion, politics, and morality are interwoven on a historic warp. The entire fabric runs about as follows: (Chap. 3) The real religion of the Japanese is ancestorism, which showed in three cults: the domestic, the communal, and the state. The domestic arose first, but the primitive family might include hundreds of households. Ancestorism in Japan confirms Spencer's exposition of religious origins. The greater gods were all evolved from ghost-cults. Good men made good gods; bad men, bad ones. (Chap. 4) The domestic cult began in offerings of food and drink made at the grave; then, under Chinese influence, was transferred to the home before tablets, where it was maintained until this present by Buddhism. Thin tablets of white wood, inscribed with the names of the dead, are placed in a miniature wooden shrine, which is kept upon a shelf in some inner chamber. Tiny offerings of food, accompanied with brief prayer, must be made each day by some member of the household in behalf of all; for the blessed dead still need sustenance, and in return can guard the house. The Buddhist rite, however, made prayer, not *to*, but *for* these dead. The Japanese scholar Hirata is correct when he declares the worship of ancestors to be the mainspring of all virtues. (Chap. 5) The family was united only by religion. The father—not the mother—was supposed to be the life-giver, and was therefore responsible for the cult. Hence the inferior position of woman. The ancestral ghost of an *uji*, or family of several households, became later the *ujigami*, or local tutelary god. Subordination of young to old, of females to males, and of the whole family to its chief, who was at once ruler and priest, shows that the family organization was religious and not marital. Both monogamy and the practice of parents selecting their child's spouse arose because best accordant with religion. Later custom makes the decision, not of the father alone, but of the household and kindred, determinative of any important step.

(Chap. 6) The communal cult of the district ruled the family in all its relations to the outer world. The *ujigami*, or clan-god, was the spirit rather of a former ruler than of a common ancestor. Hochiman was a ruler, but Kasuga an ancestor. Beside the *uji* temple of a district, there may be a more important one dedicated to some higher deity. Every *ujiko* or parishioner is taken to the *ujigami* when one month old and dedicated to him. Thereafter he attends the temple festivals, which combine fun with piety; and he makes the temple groves his playground. Grown up, he brings his children here; and,

if he leave home, pays his respects to the god on leaving and returning. Thus the social bond of each community was identical with the religious bond, and the cult of the *ujigami* embodied the moral experience of the community. The individual of such a community enjoyed only a narrowly restricted liberty. Shintoism had no moral code, because at this ancestor stage of cult religion and ethics coincide.

(Chap. 7) The great gods of nature were developed from ancestor-worship, though their real history has been long forgotten. (Chap. 8) Rites of worship and of purification were many. (Chap. 9) The rule of the dead extended to moral conduct and even to sumptuary matters, language, and amusements. (Chap. 10) Buddhism absorbed the native ancestor-cult, but prescribed that prayers be said for them, not to them. In accordance with its principle, "First observe the person, then preach the law"—that is, accommodate instruction to the hearer's capacity—Buddhism taught the masses metempsychosis instead of palingenesis, and the paradise of Amida instead of the nirvana of Buddha. Buddhism rendered its greatest service to Japan by education in the learning and arts of China. (Chap. 11) The higher Buddhism is a kind of monism.

(Chap. 12) Japanese society was simply an amplification of the patriarchal family, and its clan-groups never united into a coherent body until 1871. At first the bulk of the people were slaves or serfs, but from the seventh century a large class of freedmen—farmers and artisans—came into existence. The first period of Japanese social evolution was based on a national head, the mikado, and a national cult, Shintoism; it began in this seventh century, but developed to the limit of its type only under the Tokugawa shoguns, in the seventeenth century.

Next to the priest-emperor at the head came the *kugé*, or ancient nobility, from whose ranks most of the later regents and shoguns were drawn. Next ranked the *buké*, or *samurai*, which was the professional military class, and was ruled by nearly three hundred *daimyo*, or feudal lords of varying importance. Next came the commonalty, *heimin*, with three classes: farmers, artisans, and tradesmen, the last being despised by the *samurai*, who also could cut down any disrespectful *heimin* with impunity. Lowest of all came the *chori*—pariahs, who were not counted Japanese at all, but *mono*, "things." But even among them distinctions arose according to occupation. The close care taken of the native religion by the govern-

ment precluded rise of a church. Nor was Buddhism, divided into hostile sects and opposed by the *samurai*, ever able to establish a hierarchy independent of the government. Personal freedom was suppressed, as it would be now under socialism, which is simply a reversion to an overcome type.

(Chap. 13) The second period of Japanese social evolution lasted from the eleventh to the nineteenth century, and was marked by dominance over the mikadoate of successive dynasties of shoguns. The permanence of this mikadoate amid all perturbations of the shogunate was owing to its religious nature. (Chap. 14) Following the lord in death, suicide, and vendetta were customs based on loyalty, and they involved the noblest self-sacrifice. (Chap. 15) Catholic missions were suppressed lest they should lead to the political conquest of Japan. (Chap. 16) The Tokugawa shoguns exercised iron discipline, and now were brought to perfection those exquisite arts and manners of the Japanese. (Chap. 17) A revival of learning, begun in the eighteenth century, slowly led to a new nationalist support of the mikado; and when by 1891 the shogun had resigned and the daimiates been abolished, the third period in Japan's social evolution began. (Chap. 18) In spite of outward seeming, the ancient social conditions and ancestor-cult still control every action. (Chap. 19) The individual is still restrained by the conventions of the masses, by communistic guilds of craftsmen, and by the government's practice of taking loyal service in all its departments without giving adequate pecuniary reward. (Chap. 20) The educational system still maintains the old communism by training, not for individual ability, but for co-operative action. This is favored, too, by the universal practice of rich men meeting the personal expenses of promising students. (Chap. 21) Japanese loyalty and courage will support her army and navy, but industrial competition with other peoples calls for individual freedom. (Chap. 22) The Japanese are not indifferent to religion, and can be understood only by a study of their religious and social evolution. Future changes will be social, but ancestor-cult will persist, and offers an insuperable obstacle to the spread of Christianity.

The critical reader will not have failed to meet in this summary many positions that challenge his previous knowledge, and whether these be correct or not can be determined only by an examination of the full text, which it eminently deserves. The reviewer, however, will confine himself to certain matters that seem to him the dominat-

ing errors of the whole. Probably three greater errors were never compressed into a single sentence than in this from p. 27: "The real religion of Japan, the religion still professed in one form or another by the entire nation, is that cult which has been the foundation of all civilized religion and of all civilized society—ancestor-worship." That ancestor-worship is still professed by the entire nation is negatived by all we know from other sources as well as all we should expect. The ancestor-worship native to Japan had been appropriated by Buddhism; and, since the revolution of 1868 with its disestablishment of that church, the Butsudan, where the tablets were kept, has been largely sold as an art object or has been simply disused. The *mitamaya* mentioned on p. 50, as if in extensive use for ancestor-worship, is found only in a few purist families, and is known to the mass of Japanese only as the rear apartment or structure of a Shintoist shrine.

That ancestor-worship is "the real religion of Japan" and "has been the foundation of all civilized religion" are errors that Mr. Hearn owes to Herbert Spencer's influence, which is confessed here, and indeed is evident throughout the work. Perhaps nothing has brought Spencer into more discredit than the lengths he went to prove this basic nature of ancestorism in his *Principles of Sociology*, and the reader of pp. 121-24 of Mr. Hearn's work will readily see how futile also is the attempt to show that the nature-deities of Shintoism were only "transfigured ghosts." No, indeed, God did not make man and leave ghosts to make him religious. The heaven and the earth were here before ghosts, and man could personify them just as soon as he knew himself as a person, which he must have done long before he analyzed himself into a ghost-soul and a body. Had Mr. Hearn not ignored Réville, Max Müller, Pfeiderer, and Saussaye, while steeping himself in Spencer, he might have observed, what is plainly visible in Shintoism as elsewhere, that religion has *two* tap roots, ancestorism indeed, but also naturism.

Again, Mr. Hearn's sentence declares that ancestor-worship is "the foundation of all civilized society." This is the prevailing view throughout the work, for example on pp. 23, 57, 86, 99, 175, and 320. But other passages imply the saner view that religion and morality are co-ordinate functions of one man. Thus at p. 511 Mr. Hearn attributes Japan's power to "her old religious and social training." The many and strong cases of influence of religion upon conduct that can really be shown in Japan amount only to influence, of course, and

not to "foundation" or "origination." A quite transparent case of Mr. Hearn's error is where (p. 152) he attributes the exceptional cleanliness of the Japanese to their religion, which here, as usual, he sums up as ancestor-worship. One wonders, however, why this world-wide phenomenon of religion should determine a Japanese cleanliness; why ancestor-worshippers are not always clean, as for example the Chinese, who bathe most rarely. It seems saner to seek a cause for the unique daily bath of the Japanese in their also uniquely numerous thermal springs, which occur in no less than 388 different localities. Symbolism did indeed, in Japan as elsewhere, lead to religious bathing in rivers; but bathing in rivers, as in ocean, was never popular in Japan until recently learned from the foreigner, whereas the thermal springs are crowded, and the daily baths at home are always taken exceedingly hot after the thermal pattern, for these have been found not only cleansing, but curing and warming, the last quality being a great merit where winters are cold and houses unheated.

Finally, the reader need not expect to meet here any adequate reference to those vices that have been fostered by religion in Japan. The concubinage, confirmed by ancestorism, is once mentioned; and the harlotry, promoted by phallicism (the phallos was frequently found in a brothel, though not exclusively there, of course), is relegated to a single footnote. But such matters can be learned elsewhere, whereas the close and frequent points of influence which religion exercised upon politics and morality in Japan can nowhere else be so well studied as here.

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L'anarchie et le collectivisme. By ALFRED NAQUET. Paris: E. Sansot, 1904. Pp. 250. Fr. 3.50.

We need not present the author, his name being known throughout the world as that of a great politician, a learned chemist, and a profound philosopher. The name alone makes us anticipate a notable work. And so, indeed, it is. It has never been our fortune to read a more earnest, a deeper, or a more moderate as well as sympathetic criticism of anarchism, or, rather, of anarchistic communism.

M. Naquet has undertaken to examine and criticise the doctrine of anarchistic communism, comparing it with the doctrine of col-